



THE CHOIR SCHOOL AT ST. PETER'S

## Strategic Plan Framework 2020–2022



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The board and staff of The Choir School at St. Peter's have developed this plan to provide a strategic approach to the direction of The Choir School over a three-year period beginning January 1, 2020 and ending December 31, 2022. The goals and action steps that form the framework below are supplemented annually by internal steps and benchmarks to ensure progress toward the goals of the plan.

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**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Choir School at St. Peter’s is an auditioned community choir offering accessible and rigorous music education and performance opportunities to talented boys, girls, and young men and women from every background and every corner of the Charlotte region. Originally founded in 1993 as a boys choir in the classic European tradition, the school has grown to include five distinct choirs of boys and girls whose members range in age from seven to eighteen.

Every year the choirs of The Choir School perform for thousands of audience members, offering three concerts at St. Peter’s Episcopal Church in Uptown Charlotte as well as performances in secular and sacred settings throughout the region. Each summer our tour choirs and MasterSingers travel to destinations throughout the United States, performing for audiences all along the way. Every four years the MasterSingers travel to England to perform and to experience firsthand the roots of the Anglican choral tradition.

Rigorous instruction in music theory is integral to The Choir School program. Students memorize music and texts in multiple languages. These aspects of the program, along with the varied opportunities for performance and the experiences of touring, go far to explain the depth of a Choir School education. Choristers emerge from the program well prepared for future formal study in music, if desired, but equally ready to pursue successful futures in any other field because of the skills and characteristics they cultivate in The Choir School.

The Choir School is currently led by Artistic Director Elizabeth Lenti, Executive Director Davis Tapp, and Program Coordinator Kristie Lauderbaugh, and governed by a 13-member Board of Directors. The school is a 501c(3) nonprofit organization and is supported primarily through donations from individual contributors, corporations, and foundations.

The Choir School experience is enriched for every chorister because our choirs are comprised of talented children from every walk of life. For this reason, we do not charge tuition. We do ask families who can financially support the school to consider doing so in these ways:

- By covering the cost, or a portion of the fair market value, of their child’s participation in the program.
- By donating to the school’s endowment and scholarship funds, which makes it possible for us to maintain the highest standards of excellence and keep all the benefits of arts education accessible to the broad community.
- By participating in annual parent fundraisers.

**OUR VISION**

The Choir School’s students, board, staff and faculty use their collective gifts to enrich the community by:

- Giving all children access to an extraordinary music education and experience;
- Celebrating choral tradition and the transformative power of music;
- Creating confident, creative, collaborative Choir School alumni who successfully enrich their own communities in a wide variety of professions and endeavors.

**OUR MISSION**

The Choir School enriches and strengthens young lives through excellent, rigorous music education and choral performance.

**OUR VALUES**

We are motivated by the knowledge that arts education can be a permanent foundation for success in life.

We are dedicated to the principle that excellence and diversity are equal catalysts in the impact of the Choir School program.

We are proud to be an example of how the arts can tear down cultural barriers and build perspective, tolerance, and respect.

We believe in the value of determination, collaboration, and beauty.



## GOAL I

### Leadership

Nurture and grow a diverse team of staff, board members, and volunteer leaders who have the talent, understanding, and commitment to both safeguard our founding principles and plan and implement relevant, forward-thinking programs.

#### *Rationale*

The Choir School has thrived for over twenty-five years because of the talent and tenacity of its founders combined with continued excellence in artistic leadership. As we move into the future, it is imperative that our staff and key volunteers continue to model and deliver excellence and innovation and maintain our organizational structure to continue to support our mission beyond our founders.

#### *Strategies*

##### **Excellence**

Recruit, develop, and retain outstanding artistic and administrative professionals and key volunteers to carry out the mission of the school.

##### **Diversity**

Cultivate a board, staff, and key volunteer base that reflects the diversity of Choir School choristers.

#### *Action Steps*

**I.1** Create working staffing plan to ensure continued stability beyond founders.

*Responsibility of the Executive Committee*

**I.2** Maintain salary, evaluation, and professional development plans that reflect regional peer nonprofit sector standards, and ensure that board members are included in adequate training specific to their role.

*Responsibility of the Executive Committee and Executive Director*

**I.3** Create and execute a plan for broader board diversity.

*Responsibility of the Board of Directors, led by the Nominating & Governance Committee*

**I.4** Create and execute a plan for broader staff and key volunteer diversity.

*Responsibility of the Staff*

**I.5** Continually enhance the partnership between The Choir School and St. Peter's.

*Responsibility of the Executive Committee, Nominating & Governance Committee, and the Rector*

**I.6** Annually ensure stable succession for active Board leadership, with officer positions determined by end of April for July-June Board year.

*Responsibility of the Executive Committee and the Nominating & Governance Committee*

GOAL II

# Program

Provide the region’s most relevant, excellent, and accessible choral training program to the region’s most talented young people.

**Rationale**  
The Choir School has long aspired to be the leading choral education program in the region. This aspiration requires continual reassessment as we participate in the essential role of the arts in our changing community. We will continue to set rigorous standards, cultivate long-standing partnerships within the arts community, and seek innovative improvements to our curriculum. We will also look for new ways to recruit the region’s most talented young singers.

**Strategies**  
**Excellence**  
Provide choral music instruction and performance opportunities of the highest caliber.

**Diversity**  
Expose a diverse community of choristers to a wide range of learning opportunities, musical styles, performance venues, and professional musicians.

**Action Steps**  
**II.1** Evaluate and upgrade music theory program.  
*Responsibility of the Artistic Staff*

**II.2** Support instrumental study through creating a piano lab for all choristers.  
*Responsibility of the Artistic Staff*

**II.3** Cultivate partnerships with guest artists and peer arts organizations.  
*Responsibility of the Staff and Board, led by the Artistic Staff*

**II.4** Continue to refresh, evaluate, and implement a strong recruitment program.  
*Responsibility of the Staff and Board, under leadership of the Artistic Staff*





### GOAL III

## Financial Sustainability

Develop a financial strategy that will support our mission and vision for future seasons and safeguard our commitment to excellence and accessibility.

### *Rationale*

The Choir School must continue to execute financial practices that maximize existing resources, create opportunities for innovation and growth, and support the policies and program components that make The Choir School a unique resource to the Charlotte community.

### *Strategies*

#### **Excellence**

Develop a financial and development operating model that is both achievable and aspirational.

#### **Diversity**

Develop a financial and development operating model that keeps a Choir School education available to young people from every walk of life.

### *Action Steps*

**III.1** Sustain a methodical, timely, team approach to the annual budget process.

*Responsibility of the Program Coordinator and Finance Committee*

**III.2** Maintain contribution model with scholarships.

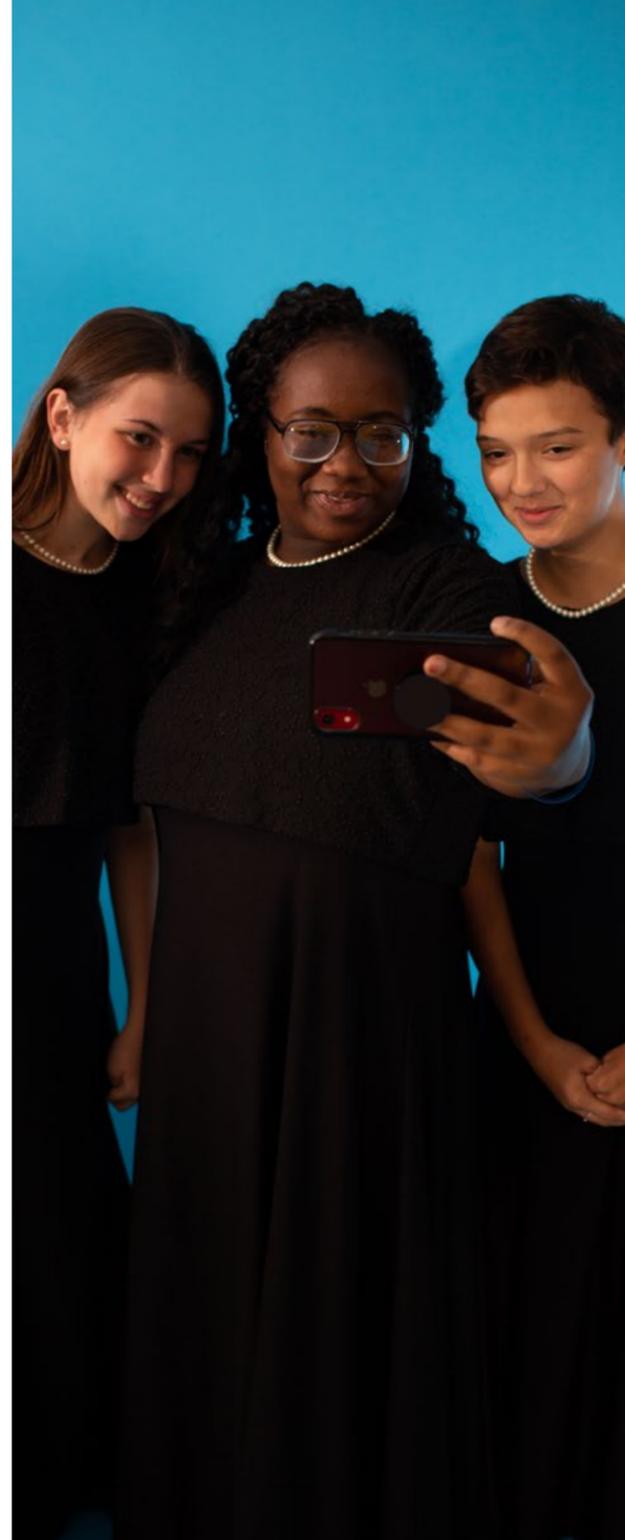
*Responsibility of the Executive Director and Finance Committee*

**III.3** Create new income streams that allow for program growth and support accessibility.

*Responsibility of the Board of Directors, Advancement Committee and Executive Director*

**III.4** Stabilize financial component of England Tour.

*Responsibility of the Executive Director, Finance Committee, and Advancement Committee*



#### GOAL IV

## Communications

Improve internal and external communication to foster a stronger community and a stronger reputation for excellence and accessibility.

#### *Rationale*

Effective communication is essential for building understanding, trust, and a sense of value for Choir School families. It is also essential for building future choirs, community partnerships, audiences, and donors.

#### *Strategies*

##### **Excellence**

Become more well known throughout the region as unique provider of excellent choral arts education.

##### **Diversity**

Build a deeper and more inclusive sense of community among choristers, families, and alumni.

#### *Action Steps*

**IV.1** Create and execute a more robust external public relations initiative, expanding existing relationships and cultivating new relationships with patrons and potential donors.

*Responsibility of the Executive Director, Advancement Committee, and the Board of Directors*

**IV.2** Expand partnerships with regional music educators.

*Responsibility of the Artistic Staff*

**IV.3** Nurture Choir School Parent Council.

*Responsibility of the Executive Director, Program Coordinator, and Council President*

**IV.4** Engage Alumni and Alumni Parents.

*Responsibility of the Executive Director*

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**  
**JUNE 2020–JULY 2021 TERM**

Abigail Cudabac, President  
*Charlotte Latin School*

Suzanne Gainey, Vice-President  
*Associate, Moore & Van Allen, PLLC*

Walter Kearns, Treasurer  
*Principal, Kearns Dameron & Co., PA*

John Arrowood  
*Judge, North Carolina Court of Appeals*

Chase Branham  
*Principal Auditor, Wells Fargo*

Caroline E. Daniel  
*Attorney, James, McElroy & Diehl*

Dr. John Hall  
*Licensed Clinical Psychologist*

Cameron Holtz  
*Community Volunteer*

The Rev. Jacob E. Pierce (ex officio)  
*Rector, St. Peter's Episcopal Church*

Maria Velez  
*Director, Interdisciplinary & Dental Education, Marketing & CPD Support, Atrium Health*

Geoffrey W. Yost  
*Owner, Yost Strategy*

Kristie Lauderbaugh\*  
*Program Coordinator*

Elizabeth Lenti\*  
*Artistic Director*

Davis A. Tapp\*  
*Executive Director*

**STAFF**

**Elizabeth Lenti** is Artistic Director of The Choir School. A native of Rochester, NY, Elizabeth is a graduate of the Eastman School of Music and the Cleveland Institute of Music. Before beginning work at the Choir School, she was Associate Director of Music and Worship at Trinity Episcopal Cathedral in Cleveland, OH and has also served as a member of the organ faculty at the Cleveland Institute of Music. She is active as a recitalist, having performed on concert series throughout the United States, and has played at regional and national conventions of both the American Guild of Organists and the Association of Anglican Musicians. Elizabeth is Director of Music and Organist at St. Peter's Episcopal Church.

**Garrett Law** is Assistant Director of The Choir School. A native of Toledo, Ohio, Garrett holds degrees in Music Theory and Organ Performance from the Cleveland Institute of Music. He earned the graduate diploma in Historical Performance Practice from Case Western Reserve University, and is a graduate of the Interlochen Arts Academy. He previously served as Organist-Choirmaster at St. James' Anglican Catholic Church in Cleveland, Ohio, and as Assistant Organist-Choirmaster at St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Akron, Ohio, where he helped lead chorister training and music theory ribbon training. As Assistant Director at The Choir School, his responsibilities include music theory instruction, vocal training, conducting, and accompaniment.

**Emily Mason** is Director of Town Choirs. Emily, a Charlotte native, began singing at the age of six with The Choir School and graduated from the Mastersingers in 2013. The Choir School inspired her to pursue the profession of sharing music with young children. After receiving a Bachelor of Music Performance from the University of South Carolina in 2017, she spent the next two years there studying Choral Music Education and recently earned her Master's degree. In addition to her work with The Choir School, she serves as the General Music Teacher at Chantilly Montessori Elementary School.

**Kristie Lauderbaugh** Kristie Lauderbaugh is Program Coordinator for The Choir School. A North Carolina native, her duties at The Choir School are to support both the artistic and administrative staff with parent and child communications, concert and tour logistics, chorister recruitment, and daily operations. Prior to joining the staff of The Choir School in the spring of 2020, Kristie was on the administrative staff of St. Peter's Episcopal Church. She also has experience working in a number of other local and international non-profit organizations in the areas of development, finance, program support, and communication.

**Davis A. Tapp** is Executive Director of The Choir School at St. Peter's. As an accomplished nonprofit executive, Davis brings significant leadership and fundraising experience to The Choir School. Prior to joining The Choir School, Davis was the primary major gifts officer for the Pi Kappa Phi Foundation in Charlotte. Earlier in his career, he worked with young people at the Boy Scouts of America in Lumberton, N.C., serving as a senior district executive responsible for fundraising, recruitment, and program. Davis is a graduate of Queens University of Charlotte.

\*non-voting director



The Choir School  
AT ST. PETER'S

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excellent, rigorous music education and choral performance.*

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